

## **Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program Monthly Report August 2017**

This month's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program update provides a summary of significant activities of State Water Board from July 15, 2017 to August 15, 2017; and, the North Coast, Central Coast, Los Angeles, Colorado River, Santa Ana, and San Diego Water Boards' from June 15, 2017 to August 15, 2017. Next month's report will present activities of the Central Valley Water Board's Program for the time period from July 15, 2017 to September 15, 2017.

### **STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD**

On July 17 and August 2 2017, Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program staff (staff) participated in the California Bioresources Alliance planning committee meeting to finalize the Annual Symposium scheduled for November 1-2, 2017. The theme of this year's symposium is "Building California's Sustainable Bioresource Economy", and will feature staff presentations from both State Water Board and the Central Valley Water Board.

On July 19, 2017, staff participated in meeting with Environmental Protection Agency Region 9 staff to discuss the biosolids component of EPA's Enforcement and Compliance History (ECHO) system. The system provides integrated compliance and enforcement data for over 800,000 regulated facilities. The system has added a new biosolids search feature that allows for customized search, sort, and download of biosolids data for the first time. The search will be available to the public and centralizes biosolids program data in an easy-to-use search tool.

On July 21, 2017, staff met with Leafy Green Marketing Agreement staff to discuss recent revisions to the United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety Modernization Act to determine water quality impacts. Staff is concerned with the Act's requirements related to irrigation water, manure of animal origin, and animal habitat.

On July 26, 2017, staff participated in a California Association of Pest Control Advisers and Certified Crop Advisers Board of Directors meeting to discuss appointment of the State Agronomist to the Board.

On July 27, 2017, staff participated in a meeting with UC Davis staff regarding the antidegradation of groundwater project under contract with the State Water Board. The UC Davis team is working towards developing tools to evaluate the effects of agricultural discharges and improvements to groundwater quality.

On August 15, 2017, staff participated in a wastewater summit presented by the California Association of Sanitation Agencies. The summit provided an overview of legislative mandates and collaborative opportunities/challenges for wastewater sector; SB 1383 Implementation Update and Direction; Case studies – realities, challenges, and benefits of co-digestion, biogas and biosolids use. Presenters included staff from Los Angeles County Sanitation District, Inland Empire Utility Agency, and East Bay Municipal Utility District.

### **REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARDS**

**North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board** - Staff are currently developing an administrative vineyard and orchard discharge draft permit and are planning to get input from an existing Stakeholder Advisory Group once the draft is ready for review. The North Coast Water Board received funding for an additional position for the Agricultural Lands Discharge Program. Once the position is filled, the person will be working solely on the development of the vineyard and orchard discharge permit. Conditional Waivers of Waste Discharge Requirements for

Discharges Related to Specific Land Management Activities in the Shasta and Scott Watersheds are scheduled for renewal by the North Coast Water Board on October 19, 2017 in Siskiyou County. As of May 11, 2017, the North Coast Water Board had a total of about 2210 entities enrolled in the Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for discharges from cannabis cultivation and associated activities. In addition, 780 of the 2210 are enrolled via a third party, with the remainder enrolled as individuals.

**Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board** - On June 27, 2017, Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board staff delivered a presentation to State Water Board staff and members on how ILRP grower enrollment and compliance data is stored and managed in the Central Coast region.

On July 11, 2017, the ILRP manager attended the first of several planned stakeholder advisory committee meetings hosted by the California Strawberry Commission, who received a \$600,000 319(h) grant to develop a certification program. The purpose of the grant is to create a third party certification program of strawberry grower best management practices to reduce discharges of nutrients and pesticides. If successful, strawberry growers could potentially demonstrate compliance with Central Coast agricultural orders through the certification program.

On August 3, 2017, ILRP staff began outreach efforts by conducting the first of several scoping meetings with growers and other interested parties regarding development of the next agricultural order, which must be in place by March 7, 2020.

**Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board** - Staff continue responding to calls and emails regarding the seven hundred thirty one Notices of Violation sent to Ventura County Growers in March 2017 for failure to enroll in the Conditional Waiver. As of July 19, 2017, 53 percent of the growers who received the Notice of Violation have enrolled in the Conditional Waiver. Staff has completed reviewing exemption requests in response to the Notices of Violation and on July 19, 2017, mailed out 76 exemption letters. Staff are currently performing inspections in Ventura County to gather information for follow up enforcement and to respond to some termination requests. Staff continue to review, comment on, and approve Conditional Waiver deliverables. The Ventura County Agricultural Irrigated Lands Group (VCAILG) submitted their Water Quality Monitoring Plan (WQMP) on April 14, 2017, which staff noticed for public comment on May 31, 2017. Staff have not yet received any comments and are currently reviewing the WQMP.

On June 23, 2017, staff approved VCAILG's Groundwater Trend Monitoring Plan in compliance with the Conditional Waiver. Staff also reviewed and approved four education classes in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties in June and July 2017.

**Colorado River Basin Regional Water Quality Control Board** - On June 15, 2017, Colorado River Basin Water Board staff received updated membership information from the Coachella Valley Irrigated Lands Coalition. Approximately 36,000 acres have renewed for regulatory coverage under the Coalition's group compliance program. Staff are reviewing the information to identify landowners that have not obtained regulatory coverage for their land.

On June 28, 2017, staff received membership information from the Imperial Valley Coalition Group. Approximately 440,000 acres are enrolled for regulatory coverage under the Coalition's group compliance program. Staff are reviewing the information to identify landowners that have not obtained regulatory coverage for their land.

On August 10, 2017, Imperial Irrigation District, a member of our Imperial Valley Coalition Group, sent Colorado River Basin Water Board a revised Selenium Study Work Plan and Quality Assurance Project Plan for review and approval. The Selenium Study will investigate agricultural and drain maintenance practices and how they influence the movement of selenium in Imperial Valley.

Staff are reviewing the two plans. Staff are continuing with the development process of a General Order of Waste Discharge Requirements to replace the Conditional Waiver for the Palo Verde Valley. A draft of the proposed Waste Discharge Requirements and supporting California Environmental Quality Act documents are being reviewed by the Board's management team. Staff are continuing the process for Board adoption, and plan to bring the General Order before the Regional Board for consideration of adoption in Fall 2017.

**Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board** - During July and August of 2017, staff met with stakeholders to discuss impediments to enrollment and coalition group formation under the Conditional Waiver for Agricultural Discharges (CWAD) in the San Jacinto River Watershed (Order No. R8-2016-0003 as amended by Order No. R8-2017-0023; the CWAD). The CWAD is the primary mechanism directing the Watershed's agricultural operations compliance for the Lake Elsinore and Canyon Lake nutrients TMDLs. The deadlines for enrollment and coalition group formation are October 28, 2017 and January 28, 2018, respectively.

The region-specific electronic Notice of Intent (eNOI) enrollment form was revised in a cooperative effort with State Water Board staff and was released for public use in July 2017. Staff sent public announcements via subscription list messages describing CWAD requirements and providing instructions to locate and complete the eNOI form.

The Lake Elsinore and Canyon Lake nutrients Total Maximum Daily Loads (Order No. R8-2004-0037) allocate a portion of the nitrogen and phosphorus loads to agriculture. The TMDLs are undergoing a technical evaluation to establish revised allocations; Regional Water Board staff are working cooperatively with agricultural coalition representatives and other stakeholders as Task Force members. Draft reports relating to the different sources and inputs of nutrients are under stakeholder review. As of August 15, 2017, staff are in the process of reviewing the reports and providing comments to the Task Force.

**San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board** - The San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board's Commercial Agriculture Regulatory Program focused its efforts with preparing for the upcoming enrollment deadline in the General Agricultural Order. Between 2,000 and 4,000 commercial agricultural operations are expected to submit a Notice of Intent and Water Quality Protection Plan. Staff worked with the State Water Board to implement an electronic NOI enrollment form and began reviewing submitted Notice of Intent and Water Quality Protection Plans